

Department of Justice  
Washington 20530

October 7, 1977

Mr. Raymond Jacobson  
Executive Director  
United States Civil Service Commission  
1900 E Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20415

Dear Mr. Jacobson:

I understand that during the interagency meeting of personnel directors on September 28, 1977 concerning Project Match, a question arose regarding the propriety of notifying employees and/or their labor bargaining units at an early stage of the project. We have considered such an approach and have concluded that proceeding in the suggested fashion could impede possible criminal investigations.

The problem of crime in America presents this Nation with a continuing challenge. In this regard, the integrity of governmental operations is and must be a paramount enforcement priority. We view Project Match as a law enforcement program, designed to detect suspected violations of various criminal statutes in such operations.

We recognize that a number of general articles have already appeared in the press in relation to Project Match. But, the premature discussion of a specific criminal matter with a putative defendant is in our view inimical to building a solid prosecutable case. Conversely, many of the employee names forwarded to Health, Education and Welfare Inspector General will quite legitimately be welfare recipients. We see no reason to prematurely apprise the former nor unduly alarm the latter. The project is designed to have only senior personnel officials of each agency receive, verify, and forward the computer matching printouts. No administrative action is to be considered until the fact that the employee identified as illegally receiving welfare benefits is well documented by each state or county involved.

The Attorney General, as chief law enforcement officer of the Federal Government, was designated by Executive Order 11396 to facilitate and coordinate the criminal law enforcement activities and crime prevention programs of all Federal departments and agencies.

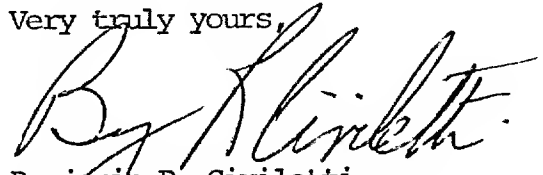


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The same order directed each Federal department and agency to cooperate with the Attorney General in the performance of those functions. The agencies are already cooperating by performing the validation process requested by Health, Education and Welfare. Their further cooperation is sought by complying with this directive not to engage in a policy of premature employee notification.

Thank you for transmitting this to each agency and department.

Very truly yours,



Benjamin R. Civiletti  
Assistant Attorney General  
Criminal Division